

WILLIAM HICKS.

APRIL 6, 1860.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. HOARD, from the Committee on Claims, made the following

REPORT.

*The Committee on Claims, to whom was referred the petition of William Hicks, praying for relief on account of services in ferretting out the incendiaries (Whites) who fired the Treasury buildings in 1833, have had the same under consideration, and beg leave to report :*

The petitioner states that he attended as a witness at court at various times to the amount of one hundred and twenty-five days, for which he says he was paid one dollar and twenty-five cents per day, and five cents per mile for travelling. The petitioner further states that "he was paid by order of the Secretary for *actual expenses only* for ferretting out the incendiaries up to February 4, 1837. The five cents mileage and one dollar and twenty-five cents per diem as witness fees was paid by Marshal Hunter; all of which was quite inadequate for services and expenses rendered in this duty performed."

In a letter accompanying the petition, dated Peru, Illinois, December 5, 1859, the following language is used :

"As to myself, there was a powerful opposition arrayed against me as prosecuting witness, yet I believe my character for truth and veracity was fully sustained. With all my perseverance, fatigue, and risk, in order to bring to light the incendiaries of the Treasury buildings, and then to be turned off with barely expense money for ferretting out so great a crime against the government, would not be very great inducement for others in future to expose crime against the United States."

The extract from the above letter is inserted for the purpose of showing that the language of the petition was intended to convey the idea that the petitioner had never been paid only his expenses for the time occupied in ferretting out the incendiaries. Your committee applied to the Treasury Department for such information as it possessed in relation to this claim, and the report from the Comptroller of that department shows the following facts :

The petitioner states that he attended the courts as a witness one hundred and twenty-five days, for which he was paid one dollar and twenty-five cents per day, and five cents per mile for travelling. The facts, as shown by the Comptroller's report, are, that he attended one hundred and eighty-nine days, for which he was paid one dollar and

twenty-five cents per day, and that he received mileage at five cents for two thousand and forty-six miles. In addition to this, however, he was paid for travelling expenses, as such witness, sixty dollars, July 29, 1836, and eighty-seven dollars, January 20, 1837. The petitioner further states that he was paid only for travelling expenses for ferretting out the Whites up to July, 1837. But the facts as shown by the said report are, that on the 4th of February, 1837, he was paid for one hundred and fifty-five days' services in aiding to arrest the Whites and procuring witnesses, at two dollars per day, and three hundred and ninety-five dollars for expenses, (the marshal having paid all expenses when they travelled together; which, as shown by the statement of the marshal, were two hundred and thirty-five dollars more, making, altogether, six hundred and thirty dollars allowed for one hundred and fifty-five days expenses,) besides two dollars per day for services.

The statement from the Treasury Department so fully disposes of the merits of this claim that your committee deem this a proper occasion to urge upon Congress the necessity of subjecting all claims of this nature to the test which has disposed of this one.

The committee report against the claim, and ask to be discharged from its further consideration.